

Weather

- UK weather during February brought temperatures that were close to average, sunshine totals below average and rainfall exceptionally below average

Transport and tour operator news

- Global air travel dropped at an annual rate of 5.6% in January, with the sharpest falls in Asia according to IATA
- European Commission plans to drop the rule that means if airlines fail to use their allocated slots at congested airports at least 80% of the time they face losing them – the move will apply during the period covered by the summer 2009 timetable
- BAA's seven UK airports handled 12.5% fewer passengers in February than a year ago, with about half the decline explained by the leap day in 2008 and heavy snow in February 2009
- BA carried 10.2% fewer passengers in February than a year earlier, due to the economic downturn, one fewer trading day and heavy snowfalls impacting the flying programme
- Virgin Atlantic set to axe its service from Mumbai to Heathrow from early May
- BA withdraw services from Dublin to London City
- Aurigny Air Services to fly daily from Jersey to Stansted from 1st May
- From mid April Air South West to fly double-daily from Plymouth to London City
- Wizz Air to fly three times per week from Prague to Liverpool from July
- The Port of Dover handled the same number of passengers during February as a year earlier

Domestic Economic News

- Bank of England cuts interest rates to 0.5%

European Economic News

- The World Bank and European Bank for Reconstruction and Development to bail out falling Eastern European Banks
- Eurozone unemployment increased to 8.2% in January
- German exports fell at an annual rate of 21% in January

US Economic News

- The US economy shrank by 6.2% in the final three months of 2008
- 651,000 Americans lost their jobs in February, taking the unemployment rate to 8.1% - the highest rate for 26 years

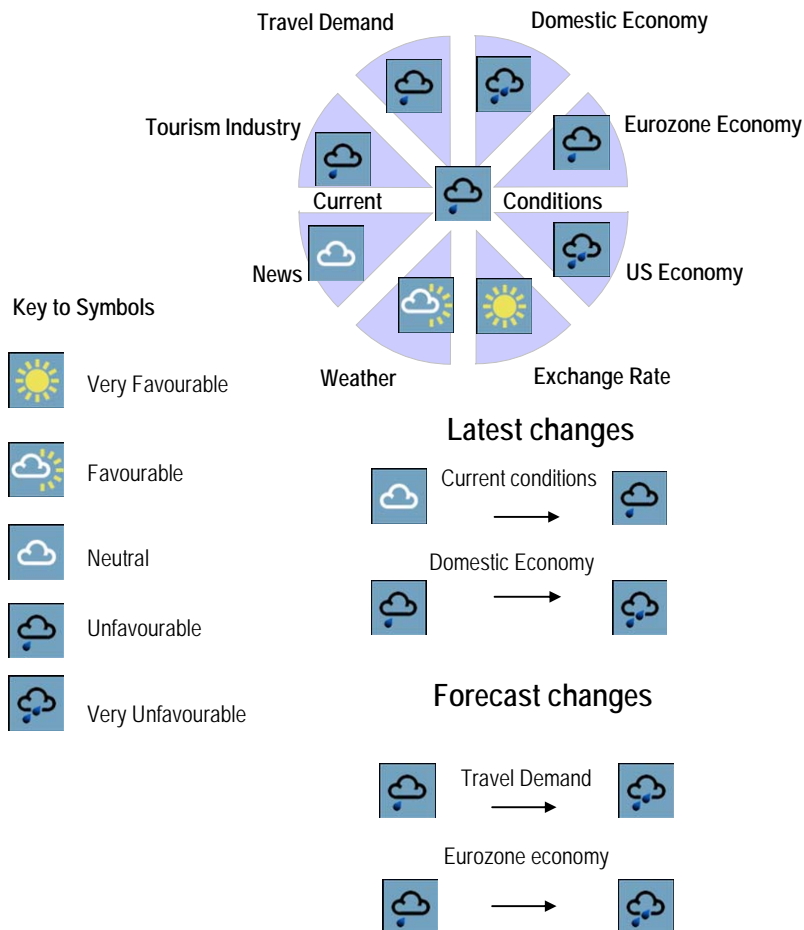
Global Economic News

- The World Bank warns that the global economy will shrink in 2009, and that trade between countries will decline at its fastest rate for 80 years
- Exports from Hong Kong decline at their fastest rate in half a century
- Australia's economy contracted by 0.5% in the final three months of 2008, a worse performance than expected
- There are now 793 US\$ billionaires in the world according to Forbes 'rich list', 332 fewer than a year ago

Tourism News

- Planning Inquiry into a second runway and second terminal at Stansted postponed until after a final decision on ownership of the facility becomes clear once the final Competition Commission report into BAA is published

Factors contributing to tourism trends in Britain, March 2009



- Overall conditions remain in the Unfavourable range
- The weather in February was favourable despite the cold start to the month
- The exchange rate remains very favourable, but not for visitors from every country
- Bank of England implement quantitative easing in an attempt to kick-start the economy
- World Bank warns of a global economic contraction in 2009
- Airlines look set to make further capacity cuts as demand continues to soften
- World Health Organisation reports further cases of H5N1 in humans in Egypt